

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Promoting Competition in the American Economy: Cable and DBS Provider Billing Practices*, MB Docket No. 23-405, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (December 13, 2023)

If you are one of the millions of people in this country who subscribe to cable television or satellite service, one day you might want to end that subscription. You may move, you might want to switch providers, or you might want to check out new competitors offering different kinds of video service. When that happens you will have to contact your cable or satellite provider. If you have ever been on one of those calls you know they are no fun. They take too long. Plus you can get charged early termination fees when all you want to do is shut the service down. On top of that, you can get stuck with paying for weeks of service you do not want just because you cut it off early in the billing cycle.

Consumers are tired of these junk fees. They now have more choices when it comes to video content. But these friction-filled tactics to keep us subscribing to our current providers are aggravating and unfair. So today we kick off a rulemaking to put an end to these practices. We propose restricting early termination fees and requiring providers to grant subscribers credits or rebates for the remaining days in a billing cycle after the cancellation of service. We ask questions about legal authority, the impact of our proposed rules, and any alternatives we should consider.

This rulemaking is part of a broader effort to make billing across the economy—and across communications—more transparent and fair. Last year, we adopted broadband nutrition labels requiring carriers to disclose service terms to consumers in an easy and simple way. This year, we proposed all-in pricing for cable television and satellite providers so the advertised price for video service would actually be the price customers pay when the bill arrives. These initiatives are important. Because consumers know when they are being stuck with charges that are unfair, fees that no one told them about, and practices that try their patience and waste their time. We can do something about this—and we should.

Thank you to the staff responsible for this rulemaking, including Katie Costello, Hillary DeNigro, Maria Mullarkey, Brendan Murray, and Holly Saurer from the Media Bureau; Douglas Galbi, Kim Makuch, and George Williams from the Office of Economics and Analytics; Susan Aaron and David Konczal from the Office of General Counsel; Joycelyn James from the Office of Communications Business Opportunities; and Cathy Williams from the Office of Managing Director.